

# The Bloomfield Record.

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1796. BLOOMFIELD. 1896.

The reopening and re-dedication service of the First Presbyterian Church last Sunday is suggestive of reminiscences that will be new to a great many, and recalled by older residents of Bloomfield with satisfaction at this time. The Record of July 3d, 1873, gave some of the incidents now printed, the occasion being then the Seventy-fifth anniversary of the church's completion, the erection of which was a great undertaking in those days.

The history of Bloomfield and that of the First Presbyterian Church had a definite and common starting-point when, on Oct. 13, 1796, the name Bloomfield was adopted in compliance to Major General Joseph Bloomfield, who afterwards became Governor of the State. Two years earlier, in 1794, a society, for religious worship had been formed by the inhabitants of Wardensson, Cranetown, Newtown, Morris Plantation, etc. In that year, a meeting was held of which Deacon Ephraim Morris was moderator, and a petition made to the Presbytery of New York for the organization of "The Third Presbyterian Congregation in the township of Newark." In the Sentinel of Freedom for Dec. 7, 1796, the following communication appeared:

"At a numerous meeting of the Congregation of Wardensson, Oct. 13, 1796, Joseph Davis, Esq., in the Chair. It appearing that agreeably to a resolution of a meeting held on the 10th inst., advertisements had been set up in three of the most public places within the bounds of the congregation notifying the objects of the present meeting; the members proceeded to choose a name by which the society should be distinguished; when it appeared that the name of Bloomfield had a large majority of votes."

Extract from the minutes. ISAAC W. CRANE, Secretary. The town name of Bloomfield was also adopted, at about the same time, and on Oct. 26th the church society was organized, and on the day following the deed to the church lot was dated, signed, and building operations put under way.

At first it was proposed to build a church of wood, and carpenters had been sent to Springfield to see the church there, with the view of building a similar one here. To this end the excavations were first made three or four rods from the southwest corner of the present stone church, and considerably smaller in dimensions. The principal objects to this were Simeon Baldwin and Ephraim Morris. There is a tradition that the latter pulled up the stakes and changed the site of building. At any rate, the plan to build a large stone church was carried, and the story of it, and a principal historical incident is told in the ballad, entitled "The Deacon and the Lime," written by Rev. George Duffield early in this century, as follows:

MR. DUFFIELD'S BALLAD. Not every man of courage bold. Fights on the bloody field. Faith gains a nobler victory still. Than when ten thousand yield. Of Deacon Davis will I sing. A godly man was he; And for this reason, dearly loved By all Christ's company. To build a Church they long had toiled. With all their might and main; A larger church by former men Will ne'er be built again.

With their own hands they squared the And brought them to the ground. And hewed the timbers round. But now they were in evil case. Their walls much needed lime. And keen and fast was coming on The dreadful winter time.

Then up and spoke this Deacon good. Unto his friend so true: "To-morrow we must go to town And see what we can do."

To lose the labor we have done Would be a heavy blow. But then the shame! if we begin And finish not also.

Next morn they take their anxious way Down to Waccusson Lane, And in the well known boat embark— God bring them safe again!

Only have they within their purse For what their journey calls; All else has long ago been spent To build the holy walls.

The coats upon their backs are old. For to themselves they swore Until God's house is all complete New clothes we will not wear. Then down the river, up the bay. They reach Mahanatt shore. He who a prosperous voyage gives Can prosper them still more.

Another providence they see. They come all in good time. Behold in port—the only one— A Yankee ship with lime!

But with the skipper for to deal Not touch do they rejoice; The gale his temper seemed to be. The surly waves his voice. "Skipper, we want your lime," said they. "For this we came to town."

"The lime is yours or any man's For fifty dollars down. No other bargain would he make Throughout the live-long day; The Deacon's friend went home again. The Deacon went to pray.

And all night long he kept his knees As one might beg to live. "The good Lord taught him thus to pray For what he meant to give. That time is for the church said he; I feel it in my soul.

No other lime will mortar make To keep the building whole. The skipper then next morn he tells At crowing of the cock. Up the Passaic takes your load And to Waccusson dock.

But whence the money was to come. The Deacon could not tell. From empty purses home, he asked Five hundred pounds as well. Slowly and sick enough at heart He bent his weary way. And when the load too heavy was He turned aside to pray.

Now all ye Christian people, see. What in the end did come To this good man, so sorely tried. When he arrived at home. By chance, forsooth, as some would say. —A chance ordained of grace— The Gov'nor, he that very day Was passing through the place.

He stopped and went into the church. He praised the people's skill. His wife, a Bible gave, and he. A fifty dollar bill. The Deacon heard the story through. Looked up to heaven and smiled. Then laid him down and slept all night As sweetly as a child. All honor to this worthy man. To those of kindred fame. And honor to the Gov'or good Who gave Bloomfield its name.

the building. The stone used came partly from the quarry of David Morris, and from one on the Bromley place. Near this latter point stood an old stone grist mill which the owner gave to the society, and the wooden roof was used for a lime and mortar house. There is a tradition that Dr. Mac Whorter laid the corner stone, and that it was a masonic corner stone laying, he being a Free Mason.

An authentic account of this event is found in the Sentinel of June 14, 1797, headed Communication from Bloomfield, as follows: "The head workmen and laborers employed at Bloomfield meeting-house take this public way of expressing their acknowledgments to Deacon Morris and Mrs. Morris for their polite and agreeable repast of cake and cider which they gratuitously afforded to them (who were forty in number) at the laying of the corner stone of the said building, and cannot refrain from expressing a hope that this new method of laying corner stones may be adopted on all similar occasions. The building goes on rapidly."

As celebrated in Mr. Duffield's ballad, General Bloomfield and his wife visited the town and church. This was on July 6, 1797. They were escorted from Orange by Lieut. Baldwin's division of Cavalry to the home of Joseph Davis. Then there was formed a procession of farmers, headed by Colonel Cadmus, workmen on the church building, the trustees, forty young ladies, two hundred school children. "They marched to the church and thence to a large bower prepared for the occasion, whence from an eminence General Bloomfield made an address, recommending the virtues of patriotism and political and Christian union. The answer was made by Mr. Watts Crane in behalf of the Society. Before General Bloomfield left the place he presented the Society with the very liberal donation of \$140 to assist in completing the building, and made provision also for adding 100 volumes to the Bloomfield Library. Mrs. Bloomfield presented them with a very elegant gift Bible."

Rev. Stephen Dodd, in his account of the beginning of the building, says: "I remember that when they were ready to lay the water table, how King got the first stone ready in the southwest corner. In the meantime they had dispatched a messenger to Col. Cadmus, requesting his presence and aid in laying this first corner stone of the water table. He was animated, walked off with speed and was there presently. The stone was placed in due order; a hammer was placed in his hand, and he performed the service and laid down on it a silver dollar. I saw the dollar and heard it ring—it was grog-money. Returning to college a few days after, I saw no more of the building till October of that year, when the main rafters having been raised, they were filling up the spaces and preparing to put on the shingles, and having put on the roof, the work was suspended. I may not be useless to remark that in order to raise the heavy timbers of the roof with safety and have a proper stage for the plastering of the arch, a complete floor was laid all over the building, level with the top of the side walls, and when the raising was over, tables were spread thereon and men, women and children marched up the gangway and took dinner on the top of the walls of the house."

Meetings were first held in the church in the summer of 1799, before the windows were in or the floors laid. Worship was conducted by the officers and sermons were read by Stephen Dodd. In 1800 the building, except the steeple, was completed. Mr. Dodd interested himself in the work of suitably dressing the pulpit, and collected \$30 with which to purchase damask silk for the pulpit. The drygoods stores of New York were searched in vain for the material and finally "an ancient lady was discovered who had a gown of that description and sold it for \$30." Mr. Dodd relating the incident says: "My wife being skilled in such work, took charge of it, and all assisting, the pulpit was handsomely dressed and the Bible and Psalm-book laid in order upon it."

The Centenary Anniversary. The Centenary Anniversary will begin on Sabbath morning, Nov. 8th, when there will be special communion service. There will be interesting exercises all through that week, ending with a historical sermon by Rev. Charles E. Knox, D. D., which will afterward be published.

## The Impending Conflict.

Let it be remembered, That the great issue of MONOMETALLISM or BIMETALLISM—WHICH? goes to the national jury on Tuesday next.

Let it be remembered, That for twenty-three years the suicidal experiment of Monometallism has been forced upon the American people; that those years have been periods of falling prices, financial and business depression, and widespread disaster; that the burden of indebtedness of the farmer has grown inversely, just as prices have fallen; that during the past five years the extent of his indebtedness has been increased by fifty per cent through depreciation of his products; that this depreciation is due to the divergence in the value of gold and silver, caused by the interdiction of the free and unlimited coinage of silver.

Let it be remembered, that the prosperity of the manufacturer of the East is bound up in the prosperity of the farmer of the West. The latter being rendered unable to buy, the manufacturer experiences a lessening market for his goods, contracts his productions and, consequently, has less of employment for his men, and they are reduced in their hours, laid off or discharged. Thus, from enforced idleness, the wage-earner also suffers and becomes a burden on those who continue to labor. An enforced economy follows, which again reacts back to the farm-producer.

Again, this curtailment reaches and lessens the demand for railroad transportation, and another enforcement of economy in supplies and the laying off of hands follows in that industry. In fact, you cannot strike down the great farming interests of the country without paralyzing every legitimate industry. An examination by honest and sincere investigators shows beyond peradventure that high-tariff protection does not benefit, but on the contrary handicaps the farmer, and, consequently, is not the remedy for the ills under which he suffers, and shows also as an eventual consequence, that it cannot avail for the manufacturer; that bimetalism, and bimetalism alone, will bring back the lost prosperity to all industries, and that all producers will be placed on an equal footing with the silver-using and paper-using competitors of Europe; that bimetalism is national, not sectional; that it redounds to the advantage of all producing classes and is sectional to no part of the country.

These, I am constrained to believe, are great fundamental economic principles, and must carry with them a commanding and inspiring influence, and that by them alone can the American people achieve true greatness and prosperity.

Let it be remembered, That under bimetalism there will be payment of all legal debts in 100 cent silver dollars and 100 cent gold dollars, the same as now, and that the only difference will be, more of them, and the farmer will have to give less of the products of his soil for those dollars than he does now.

Let it not be forgotten, that bimetalism is the constitutional financial policy established by the wise founders of the Republic; and under which our greatest prosperity and advancement in the utilitarian pathways of civilization were made.

Let it be duly considered, that the great reform sentiment of this country is solidified against the gold standard. Remember, that if this battle is won by the valiant forces of free-coinage, and our land redeemed from the blight of the single standard, it may be our happy fortune to behold the blessings of bimetalism extended to the whole world.

Let it be remembered, that Mr. McKinley, and most of his singers of the songs of monometallism, not forgetting Messrs. Ingersoll, Reed, Halsted, Palmer, Harrison, Dana, and others, in the days of their more innocent and virtuous youth, sang in tones heavenly sweet the songs of bimetalism; and that now their voices, hoarse and broken from shouting the discordant refrain of the gold standard, but little more than resound the memory of the celestial climes, whence they sprang.

Let it not be overlooked, that if Mr. McKinley is elected to be the next President of the United States, there will be a hand behind Mr. McKinley, more powerful than Mr. McKinley himself—the hand that crushed the Sailors' Unions of the Lakes—that cornered the output of coal and took from the consumers four millions in one dastardly operation—the hand that crushed the American miners and swept them from their nearly paid for homes, at Spring Valley, and then replaced them with Huns and Poles; that a most dangerous precedent will be established by putting the armies and navies of the United States and all the great executive departments under the power of an irresponsible and unauthorized agent.

Forget not, that "Sound Money," "Honest Dollar," and "Public Integrity" are labels for such French plate goods as Messrs. Hanna, Platt and Quay represent.

Let it be remembered, that the great Trusts are extending their tentacles into every industry of the land: that the Standard Oil now holds the world in its consuming embrace, and that monometallism is the Archimedean lever upon which they all rest.

Remember, that coercion and intimidation is a worm at the root of the great Magna Charta of our liberties, threatening it with destruction and death; that the moral sense of a people once destroyed, the words that would voice the rights and liberties of men will be like unto those of the Atrurian parrot, that spoke in a language that was dead, and unto a people that understood it not.

Remember the story of Arnold's treason, and reflect that he had no country to betray. There are those who have; and that there are apostates and political scoundrels, compared with those treacherous deeds the literal history of Benedict Arnold is a holy mystery.

Remember, that as Nebraska's noble son voices the words of financial and anarchic redemption Cerberus lifts his hundred heads and barks "Anarchy!"

And, finally, let it not be forgotten, that on Tuesday next this great battle of the standards is to be fought to a finish. Let us not fail in our duty on that day, and I doubt not the victory will be to the people's cause, and that it will be our happy privilege to behold this Federation of States resume her earlier prosperity, and go on to her great future, a combination of power, a spectacle of heart-cheering magnificence, and an inexhaustible fountain of blessings to succeeding posterity, and that there shall be forever a glorious band of true lovers of their country to gather beneath the spreading folds of her "thrice-glorious banner to defend and enjoy their inheritance of freedom."

FAIRVIEW, October 27th, 1896.

A DESPERATE APPEAL TO "THE CHURCHES." Editorial From The New York Times. When the mighty parade of Republican Honest Money voters marches up Broadway on next Saturday the waving Stars and Stripes will move them to new efforts for the cause of all people who love this Government. Why should not the churches speak in the same cause on the following day? The flag will give us inspiration on Saturday. On Sunday the Church will give us zeal. The flag on Saturday, the church on Sunday and the ballot on Tuesday.

And on Wednesday what? Should Mr. Bryan be elected, or not, is a army of tried and true patriots will sing as sang our True-Blue Soldiers, in the South, winning or losing battles, up to Appomattox: "Rally round the Flag, boys, rally once again: Shouting the battle-cry of Freedom!"

The People's Republican party was not born to die when the polls closed in November, 1896, with Fremont defeated and Buchanan elected. Oh no! Nor will the People's Democratic party die next Tuesday if Mr. Hanna's campaign wins. The party Bryan leads is stronger to day than it was yesterday, and will be stronger next Wednesday, and its Adversary weaker, no matter who is elected. After all the editorial and oratorical egg-throwing, and after all that the clergy can say against him, Mr. Bryan will come out of this contest unsundered and victorious, the foremost American of this generation.

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